

*This is a fictional article.*

## SAMPLE News Article

### For March 27 Issue of Hilltop Daily News (Local Newspaper)

#### Hilltop FFA Member Named State Star Farmer

By Jess Collins, Hilltop FFA Advisor

Sam Johnson of the Hilltop FFA chapter was recently named State Star Farmer during the Nevada FFA Convention in Reno, March 21 - 25. Johnson, who was raised on his family's cattle ranch, was honored for demonstrating outstanding skills and proficiencies in owning and operating a registered cow-calf cattle business as well as his record in agricultural education, scholarship and leadership. The State Star Farmer is one of the most prestigious awards the Nevada FFA Association can bestow upon a member.

"Agriculture has always been a big part of my life and receiving this award is exciting and inspiring," said Johnson, a freshman at the University of Nevada. "I hope to continue growing my cattle business with the intention of becoming part owner of my family's ranching operation after college."

Johnson, the son of Bob and Sue Johnson, began his agricultural endeavors at the age of 8, starting with five mother cows. He has since expanded his herd to more than 100 registered Angus cows and a custom herd bull. He is responsible for all decisions relating to his cattle including feed, marketing and vaccination programs.

Johnson's cattle business is the cornerstone of his Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) program, one of three components that encompass agricultural education. To qualify for the award, he had to attain the State FFA Degree. This requires Nevada FFA members to earn and invest at least \$1,000 or work at least 300 hours through SAE while meeting specific educational, leadership and scholastic requirements. Johnson was among more than 25 students competing for Star Farmer honors.

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## **SAMPLE Feature Article**

**For Nebraska Farm Bureau Publication, September 2004 Issue**

### **Agricultural Education Plants Seed for Career Success**

By Cheryl Barnes, Nebraska Ag Teachers Association

When Sally Jones registered for agriculture class her freshman year of high school, pursuing a career in agriculture was not among her future plans. Today, the 18-year-old senior manages the greenhouse at County High School in Omaha with plans to attend the University of Nebraska and study horticulture next fall. Jones has taken what was once a small school experiment and turned it into a flourishing enterprise with more than 50 plant varieties, which are sold and marketed to local businesses. For her work, Jones receives a monthly stipend that she is saving for college.

“I never planned on discovering my future career while in high school,” said Jones with a grin. “Working with plants and people is a natural fit for me, and eventually I’d like to own and operate my own nursery-landscape business. One of the primary benefits of agricultural education is that it encourages students to start thinking about and planning for a career early.”

This is just one of many success stories related to Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs, the hands-on component of agricultural education. Jones, an inner city student, started working in the greenhouse to simply meet the SAE requirement. In less than four years, it has become much more – her future and part of agriculture’s future. It has exposed her to the business community and has taught her the basics of maintaining records, balancing budgets and managing people. She also has a solid foundation in horticulture, giving her a head start among her peers.

**(More)**

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When asked about the value of agricultural education, look no farther than the students involved in it. Agricultural education, FFA and SAE are more relevant to today's educational environment than ever before. There is no greater career preparation than a combination of classroom instruction, leadership training and "real world" experience. It is especially beneficial when it attracts unsuspecting talent like that of Sally Jones and keeps that talent in agriculture.

The Nebraska Farm Bureau's support of agricultural education is essential and much appreciated. If you ever need justification for the support your organization provides, think of Sally Jones and thousands of other Nebraska students who are planting the seeds for career success in agriculture.

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